

Unit Commendation for their ongoing homeland defense efforts as part of Operation Noble Eagle.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the 177th "Jersey Devils" have dedicated themselves to securing the skies of the East Coast from terrorist threats and have set an example of excellence for their colleagues in the military and for their neighbors in the Second Congressional District of New Jersey.

Recently, I accompanied General Ralph Eberhart, Commander of the Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), on a trip to the 177th Fighter Wing to review the unit and thank them for their service. The pride and devotion to duty I saw that day was at the same level it was in the days after September 11 and I am firmly convinced this dedication will remain evident and strong for the duration.

This award is well deserved and I want to congratulate the leaders of the NJANG 177th Fighter Wing—Wing Commander Col. Michael G. Cosby, Vice Commander Col. Barry M. Johnson, Vice Wing Commander Lt. Col. Brian L. Webster, Vice Air Commander Lt. Col. Randall S. King, Executive Officer Capt. Yvonne L. Mays, and Command Chief Master Sergeant Herbert E. Mimler, Jr. on this award.

I also congratulate the Wing's group, squadron and flight commanders including Lt. Col. Roger F. Pharo, Jr., Lt. Col. Richard L. Hutchinson, Col. James T. Strader, Jr., Col. David J. Mellish, Lt. Col. Jeffrey C. Thomas, Maj. David G. Haar, Lt. Col. John C. Elwood, Lt. Col. Kerry M. Gentry, Maj. Michael K. Love, Maj. Stephen G. McBrearty, Maj. John J. Fogarty III, Lt. Col. Harry Hartman, Lt. Col. Scott J. Barberides, Capt. Diana M. Brown, 2nd Lt. Richard L. Defeo, 2nd Lt. Brian W. McCarthy and Capt. Thomas S. Fanslau. I salute each and every member of the Wing for their hard work and service to our nation. The efforts of the 177th Fighter Wing have been essential to America's homeland defense and this award honors those efforts. Congratulations.

REGARDING THE DIABETIC FOOT COMPLICATION AND LOWER EXTREMITY AMPUTATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2003

HON. RICHARD H. BAKER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, as the Federal Government seeks to provide better healthcare to more Americans while reducing healthcare expenses, we must look at the benefits of preventive care programs. Education, screening and preventive treatments can save patients and government significant heartache and expense. One area where preventive care shows tremendous promise is the treatment of diabetic foot complications.

There are an estimated 17 million Americans who have diabetes. This number represents an increase of 61 percent since 1990. As diabetes rates continue to rise, the cost of treating diabetes, already estimated at \$132 billion, will certainly rise. One of the most serious complications diabetes patients face is poor circulation and infections in their lower extremities. In fact, diabetic foot infections are

the most common reason for hospital admissions among persons with diabetes, accounting for one-quarter of all diabetic admissions in the United States. Loss of circulation and feeling present real challenges to people with diabetes and 15 percent of people with diabetes will experience a foot ulcer, and between 14 and 24 percent of those with a foot ulcer will require amputation.

There are tremendous costs associated with treating foot ulcers and with lower extremity amputations. In fact, lower extremity amputations cost Americans \$2 billion a year and the average cost of a lower extremity amputation is \$60,000. Although private insurance bears some of the cost of diabetic foot complications, Medicare is saddled with many of these costs since these complications disproportionately affect the elderly. For example, analysis of the 1995 Medicare claims revealed that lower-extremity ulcer care accounted for \$1.45 billion in Medicare costs and contributed substantially to the high cost of care for diabetics, compared with Medicare costs for the general population. In fact, the Medicare costs for diabetes patients with foot ulcers is 3 times higher than for diabetes patients in general, and inpatient care accounts for 74 percent of diabetic ulcer-related costs.

Fortunately, cost effective ulcer prevention and treatment interventions have proven effective at reducing foot complications and lower extremity amputations at only a fraction of the cost. There are a number of descriptive studies that show that a multidisciplinary approach, including preventive strategies, patient and staff education, and treatment of foot ulcers, can reduce amputation rates by 40 to 85 percent. Nationwide reductions of this size would save Americans between \$800 million and \$1.7 billion a year. Of note, the LSU Health Sciences Center Diabetes Foot Program in Baton Rouge, Louisiana enrolled over 2,300 diabetes patients with published research demonstrating their prevention and treatment program resulted in an 89 percent reduction in foot related hospitalizations, an 81 percent reduction in emergency room visits, and a 79 percent reduction in foot amputations at a cost of about 50 percent of standard care.

With sound research showing the benefits of preventive care for people with diabetes, now is the time to commission a large, authoritative study on the issue. The results of this study will serve as solid evidence to public and private organizations of the need for preventive care to aid in the reduction of diabetes foot complications and will help foster technical and policy changes to healthcare programs. In addition, thousands of Americans who participate in this study will benefit from the education and treatment provided by this grant program.

Mr. Speaker, I hope members will consider these facts and cosponsor the "Diabetic Foot Complication and Lower Extremity Amputation Reduction Act of 2003."

TRIBUTE TO PETER "TOM" SAVICH

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise before this body of

Congress and this nation today to pay tribute to the life and memory of an extraordinary citizen from my district. Peter "Tom" Savich of Silverton, Colorado recently passed away at the age of eighty. Tom was an involved citizen and a fixture of his community, and I am honored to pay tribute to him here today.

Tom was a life-long resident of Silverton, living in the house in which he was born for his entire life. Like so many of his generation, Tom heeded his country's call and served in the Army during World War II. On D-Day, Tom fought with the troops that stormed Omaha Beach in Normandy. He fought with remarkable bravery and courage, which earned him the Bronze Star for bravery, the Medal for European-African-Middle Eastern Service, and the French Jubilee of Liberty Medal.

Upon returning home, Tom became very involved in his community. He helped found Silverton's American Legion Post 14. He was active in the rehabilitation of the Silverton Hillside Cemetery, and he took a leadership role in maintaining many gravesites that would have otherwise been neglected. Tom was especially concerned with the graves of bachelor miners and was instrumental in ensuring that their final resting places received proper care and attention. Tom also collected artifacts chronicling Silverton's history, which he organized into the Tom Savich Museum.

Mr. Speaker, Tom Savich was a humble, generous person who cared greatly about his fellow man. As his family and friends mourn his passing, I am honored to pay tribute to Tom's life and his dedication to his community here today.

TRIBUTE TO CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN MOUNT VERNON, IL

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Central Christian Church in Mount Vernon, Illinois as the members celebrate the sesquicentennial of the church on October 4–5, 2003.

Central Christian Church became a part of the Mount Vernon and Jefferson County communities on October 3, 1853 with 21 members. The church came into existence due to the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey T. Pace, who organized the local church according to New Testament traditions. Today, the church boasts of a membership of over 1,200, with seven members on the pastoral staff. In January 2004, it will open a new 1,000 seat worship center.

Central Christian Church is a shining beacon for the community which it serves. I am proud to represent Central Christian Church as part of the 19th District of Illinois. My prayer is that God will continue to bless the church and the members that worship there. May Central Christian Church continue to be prosperous in their service to the Lord Jesus Christ.